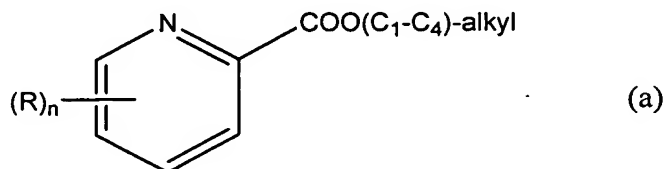


AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. – 7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl pyridine-2-carboxylate

~~derivatives~~ compound of the formula a

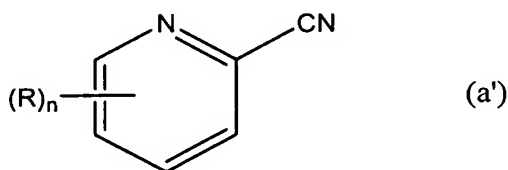


in which

R is hydrogen or a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>12</sub>-alkyl or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>12</sub>-alkox radical and

n is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4,

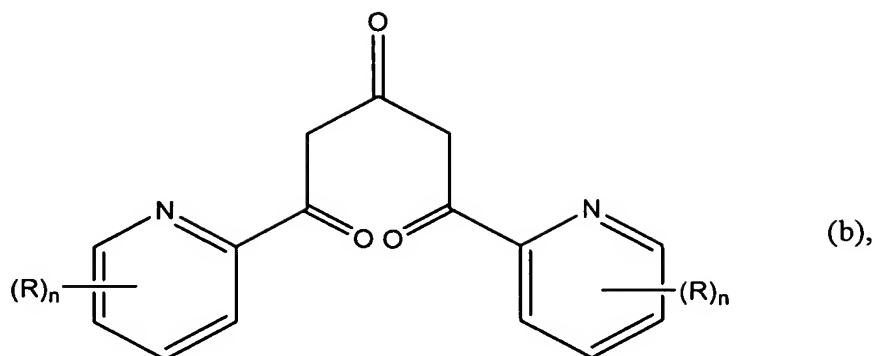
by acid hydrolysis of a 2-cyanopyridine ~~derivative~~ compound of the formula a'



by means of an anhydrous inorganic acid or its anhydride in the presence of water and a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkanol, wherein an equimolar amount of water is added to the 2-cyanopyridine ~~derivative~~ compound of the formula a' prior to addition of the anhydrous inorganic acid or its anhydride.

9. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a 1,5-bis(2-pyridyl)pentane-1,3,5-trione

~~derivatives~~ compound of the formula b

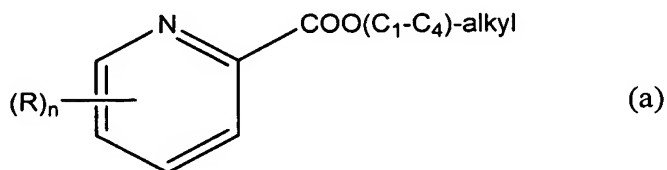


in which

R are hydrogens or identical C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>12</sub>-alkyl or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>12</sub>-alkoxy radicals and

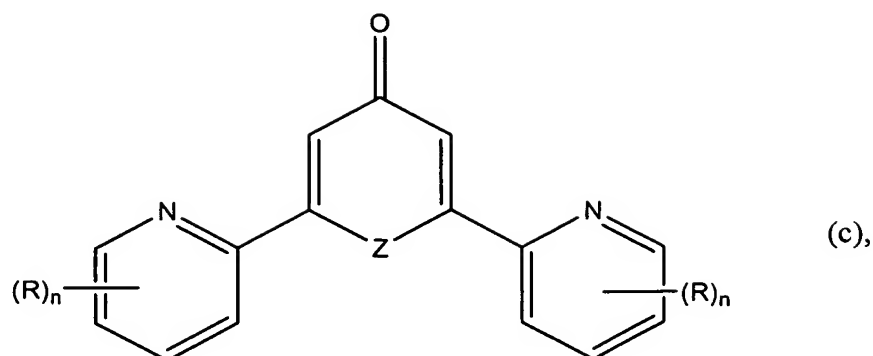
n is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 and is the same for both sets of radicals R,

by condensation of the C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl pyridine-2-carboxylate derivative compound of the formula a



with acetone in an aprotic solvent in the presence of an alkali metal C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxide or alkaline earth metal C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxide as base.

10. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 9, wherein the base used is an alkali metal C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxide.
11. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 9, wherein the base used is sodium C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxide.
12. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 9, wherein the base used is sodium methoxide.
13. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a 2,6-bis(2-pyridyl)-4(1*H*)pyridinone derivatives compound of the formula c



in which

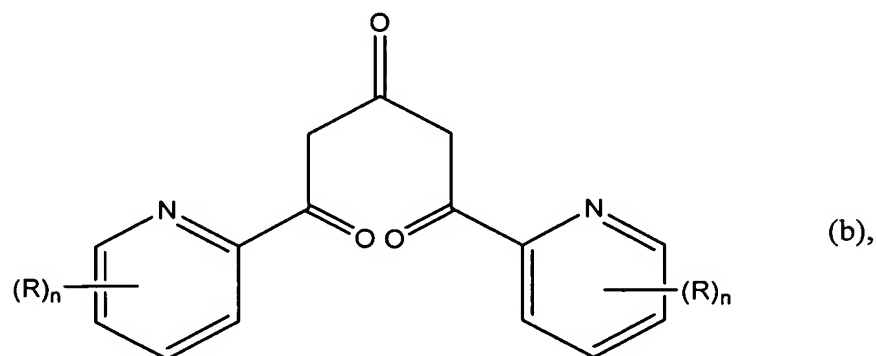
R are hydrogens or identical C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>12</sub>-alkyl or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>12</sub>-alkoxy radicals,

n is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 and is the same for both sets of radicals R,

Z is NH or NH<sub>2</sub><sup>⊕</sup>[Y<sub>1/q</sub>]<sup>⊖</sup> and

Y is the anion of a q-basic acid H<sub>q</sub>Y,

by reacting the 1,5-bis(2-pyridyl)pentane-1,3,5-trione derivative compound of the formula b



with ammonia or ammonium salts (NH<sub>4</sub>)<sub>q</sub>Y with removal of the water of reaction formed, wherein the removal of the water of reaction is carried out using a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alcohol as entrainer.

14. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 13, wherein the removal of the water of reaction is carried out using ethanol, n-propanol, i-propanol or n-butanol as entrainer.

15. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 13, wherein the removal of the water of reaction  
is carried out using ethanol as entrainer.

16. – 17. (Cancelled)